

Friday 10/16//20

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Navy Looking for New Radar to Plug Holes in Truncated Zumwalt Destroyer's Abilities
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

Years ago, the US Navy made the hard decision to eliminate one of the stealthy USS Zumwalt's search radars as part of a cost-saving move. Now the service wants that capability back, but it isn't simply attaching the canceled radar, it's looking for a whole new system.

Observers could be forgiven for getting whiplash from the US Navy's DDG-1000 program, the service's effort to build the huge, stealthy destroyer of the future. What started out as a class of 32 ships - each of which would replace two batteries of land-based howitzers and would have more than two dozen more missile launch tubes than the present Arleigh Burke-class destroyers - was watered down to three warships [that were for years without an able combat system](#) after the main guns were canceled to save money.

Along the way, the Zumwalt's powerful Dual Band Radar (DBR) got the axe too, with one of the arrays, an AN/SPY-4 S-band long-range search radar, [being removed from the ship in 2010 since it was a bit too costly](#) and a bit too experimental to meet strict budget justifications at the time. That left it with just the AN/SPY-3, an X-band emitter already in use on several other US Navy warships that was plenty capable, but far from what the Navy had envisioned for the Zumwalt class.

Now, however, the Navy wants that lost capability back, according to a spokesperson for Naval Sea Systems Command who [spoke to The Drive's The War Zone on October 15](#). "The Navy is exploring several alternatives to sustain air and surface search capability aboard the Zumwalt-class ships," the spokesperson said, noting that "no decision has been made at this time" about whether or not they will add a new radar, or which it would be.

While the Zumwalt didn't get the DBR setup, the new aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford has, as will its sister ship, the USS Enterprise. However, subsequent Ford-class ships won't have the setup, instead using a new AN/SPY-6(V)3 radar, [also simply called the Air and Missile Defense Radar \(AMDR\)](#). The Navy plans on putting the AMDR on a variety of upcoming ships, including amphibious assault ships and landing docks and even the new missile frigate, [the USS Constellation, announced last week](#). According to The Drive, this radar could also find a new home on the Zumwalt, but there are many other possibilities, too.

Patching up the Zumwalt's hamstrung capabilities has proven challenging: originally proposed in 1992, the warship's keel wasn't laid down until 2011 and the warship wasn't commissioned until 2016. As of 2020, it hasn't performed a single mission, having only received its missile combat system in March [and a 30-millimeter deck gun in May](#). Not a great record for the world's largest cruiser.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Russian Embassy Reviewing Unconfirmed Reports Paris Stabbing Suspect Was From Moscow
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

The Russian Embassy in Paris said on Friday evening it was attempting to confirm a report on France's BFM TV that the assailant who is accused of decapitating a teacher outside the French capital earlier on Friday was a Russian citizen born in Moscow.

BFM TV reported Friday that the man who was suspected of killing a French middle school teacher earlier in the day was born in Moscow. The Russian Embassy in Paris has not yet commented on the report's veracity.

[According to reports, the 18-year-old man attacked](#) a middle school teacher in Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, a suburb of Paris, with a "knife" after the teacher showed offensive caricatures of the Prophet Mohammad in class. [According to the Associated Press, the images were reprints](#) of those printed by French satirical outlet Charlie Hebdo in January 2015 that prompted two men to storm the paper's offices and massacre a dozen staffers, injuring nearly a dozen more.

The suspected assailant was later killed by police in Eragny, a neighboring town, during the subsequent chase. Paris has categorized the incident as a "murder in connection with a terrorist enterprise" and the anti-terrorism prosecutor's office is on the case.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Photo: China's Shipyards Expanding to Keep Up With PLA's Nuclear Submarine Plans
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

As China's navy continues to expand, it's pushing existing shipyards to the limit. Recent satellite images show the country's only facility for building nuclear submarines is undergoing considerable expansion.

Photos taken by the South Korean reconnaissance satellite Arirang-2 on September 19 show the Bohai Shipyard at Huludao, in China's Liaoning Province, is in the midst of a major expansion project.

[According to USNI News, which first obtained the image](#) via ShadowBreak Intl, Bohai is building a second construction hall, allowing it to build two submarines simultaneously. At present, the shipyard can only build one large nuclear-powered submarine at a time, meaning that the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) can only receive one new submarine at a time.

[Asia Times reported in June that Bohai had been expanding](#) its facilities since 2014, but with the dawn of the new Type 095 nuclear-powered attack submarine and the upcoming Type 096 ballistic missile submarine, the existing facilities likely cannot fit more than one sub at once. However, USNI News claimed each hall could still hold two submarines at once.

For a navy that [hopes to get at least six new nuclear-powered attack submarines](#) in the next decade, that's a troublesome bottleneck.

China's other shipyards are expanding, too, [such as the massive project outside Jiangnan Shipyard](#) in Shanghai, where the PLAN's [two new Type 002 aircraft carriers are being built](#).

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Israeli Forces Launch Retaliatory Strikes on Gaza Strip - Reports
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

Explosions were reported in the Gaza Strip early Saturday morning local time, hours after a rocket was launched from the Palestinian territory into Israel.

[According to local reports](#), Israeli aircraft bombed an observation post along Gaza's eastern border with Israel. There was also [at least one unconfirmed report](#) the explosion had been a balloon with explosives attached to it and not an airstrike.

Friday evening, [a rocket fired from Gaza set off air sirens in the Israeli town](#) of Netiv Ha'asara, just north of Gaza, before exploding harmlessly in an empty field.

The incident came after news earlier this week the Israeli government had [advanced plans to build nearly 5,000 housing units](#) in the Palestinian West Bank, which is already heavily colonized with Israeli settlements and which Jerusalem [only narrowly backed away from plans to annex](#) earlier this year.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

'Distraction Mechanism': NYT's Crocodile Tears Over Iran Sanctions Disguise Role in Justifying Them
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

What seems to be a compassionate plea for mercy from Washington by a major US newspaper is actually just a furthering of the US propaganda war against Iran that's responsible for the strangling sanctions that frustrate its ability to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, a doctor and activist told Sputnik.

An op-ed by the New York Times Editorial Board on Tuesday urged: ["Iran's Covid-19 Death Toll Is Rising. Show Mercy, Mr. Trump."](#) However, while the article noted the extensive and deliberate damage US President Donald Trump's "maximum pressure" policies toward Tehran have had on that country's economy and the impact this has had on its ability to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, the second half of the story is dedicated to demonizing Iran as a state with a "large number of political prisoners who are being held on trumped up charges and who are at risk of contracting the coronavirus." The Times urges Iran to "be wise" and release them as well.

In doing so, the Times editors appear to be making a compassionate plea, but in fact precisely reproduce the position of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Trump's chief overseas diplomat. On March 10, as the novel coronavirus was rapidly spreading in Iran, the second country to bear the brunt of the pandemic after China, Pompeo tweeted that "any nation considering humanitarian assistance to Iran should seek the release of all dual and foreign nationals" held by the southwest Asian country.

Two days later, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif [wrote a letter to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres](#) explaining that US sanctions are "obstacles to the sale of medicine, medical supplies and humanitarian goods," and [tweeted a list of "urgent needs"](#) faced by Iranian doctors "stymied by vast shortages caused by restrictions on our people's access to medicine/equipment" due to US sanctions.

The New York Times has always been more than happy to amplify voices making the case not just for the Trump administration's present economic and political war on Iran, but also for expanding it. In June 2019, a piece by Times opinion columnist [Bret Stephens titled "Pirates of Tehran"](#) declared, "If Iran won't change its behavior, we should sink its navy." The piece was in response to accusations by US intelligence, which the Times uncritically reported as accurate, finding that Iranian frogmen had planted explosive mines on several oil tankers that caught fire off the coast of the United Arab Emirates.

Then on January 10, 2020, 10 days after the US illegally assassinated Maj. Gen. Qasem Soleimani, the commander of Iran's elite Quds Force, in a drone strike outside Baghdad, the Times printed an explosive opinion piece by hawkish Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR) that made ["The Case for Killing Qasim Suleimani."](#) A few months later, when the Times again published a piece by Cotton advocating martial law in the US to crush protests against police brutality and white supremacy, [the staff "revolted," according to Vox](#), forcing opinion editor James Bennet to resign. The Soleimani piece, however, caused no such "revolt."

Dr. Margaret Flowers, co-founder of Popular Resistance and director of the Health Over Profit for Everyone campaign, told [Radio Sputnik's Political Misfits](#) on Friday that the corporate media "always has to try to justify US cruelty or demonize another country that the United States is targeting."

"We have to realize that the United States has been imposing economic warfare on Iran ever since 1979 when they had their revolution and dared to challenge the United States and stand up to US power. The impact of this economic war on Iran is severe. And the US really doesn't have any political space to talk about when it comes to prison populations, but that's another topic," Flowers told hosts Michelle Witte and Bob Schlehuder.

"But just looking at the economic war being waged on Iran, I was in Iran last year on a peace delegation and talked to people about the fact that food prices are so high that [they can't get medications - even if they could afford them](#); they still can't get those medications. That the impact of this economic war - which is supposed to exclude food and medicine - results in the fact that Iran can't do economic transactions with other countries to purchase the things that they need, or students can't even go to school abroad because they have no way to pay their tuition to that school because they can't use their money in those other countries," she said. Flowers noted the US' actions are both illegal and "extremely punitive," and also expose the US as the odd man out around the world as other countries move to increase their cooperation to

combat the COVID-19 pandemic, but Washington ramps up sanctions that frustrate that process.

"When you look around the world at countries that we try to demonize, like Iran and China, and then you compare their prison populations based on the population of that country to the United States, we find that it's really the United States that is the prison-state in the world," Flowers told Sputnik.

Since the pandemic began, [Iran has released into home confinement some 85,000 prisoners](#) - one-third of its entire prison population - in an effort to combat the spread of the virus, which flourishes in places like prisons. However, [according to US Bureau of Prisons data cited by Forbes](#), the US has released just 7,700 prisoners into home confinement in response to compassionate release requests - just 0.3% of its 2.3 million-strong prison population, and one-tenth the number of people Iran has released.

Flowers noted that, contrary to US posturing, it does have political prisoners behind bars, including American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier and Black Panther Party member Mumia Abu-Jamal, among many others. She further pointed out that most prisoners in the US are there for nonviolent offenses often relating to possession, sale or sale of drugs, which should be a health care issue.

"A primary job of people who are working for social movements and transformation in the United States is actually to bring people factual information about what is actually going on" in countries targeted by the US for sanction or regime change, Flowers said. "Because the corporate media in large part really serves as a distraction mechanism, so kind of shaping the public dialogue of what people should be talking about, and it's generally not the things we're experiencing ... This is a huge job of the movement, is to make people aware."

"And when it comes to foreign policy, that's another huge area of misinformation. Basically, if there's a country that's being targeted by the United States, anything that someone hears or reads in the corporate media needs to be questioned about whether it's factual or not. And that's something I've found in my trip to Iran, in my trip to Venezuela, Palestine, other places around the world, is that we're being fed this narrative. What's been used throughout time is to dehumanize people, make them seem like they're lesser than us, make them seem like they're backwards compared to us, and that's American Exceptionalism, and that's what's used to justify our attacks on so many countries around the world. And we have to recognize that the majority of the countries that the United States is targeting are predominantly Black and brown or Asian countries," Flowers said.

Flowers said that "economic warfare is being waged on people inside the United States" as well as people in other countries.

"It's a long-term war, and it's a bipartisan one," she said. "We are one of the wealthiest nations in the world, and yet we don't have affordable housing, we don't have affordable education, we don't have universal health care for everyone. We can afford to do that for people, it's a conscious choice, and it's bipartisan not to do that. And when you put on top of that the crises that we're facing right now, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the recession, it's just even more heinous that this is actually happening."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Playful Golden Retriever Gets Into Halloween Spirit - Video Club

Max, a lovable golden retriever from Titusville, Florida, recently triggered a series of smiles at a local home improvement store after entering the grounds while sporting his Halloween costume. Video obtained by licenser ViralHog captures the ball of fluff diving headfirst into spooky season, instantly transforming into his inner king of the grasslands by fitting into his lion's mane. "We thought walking him through Home Depot would brighten everyone's day there and it certainly did," the pup's humans said in a statement to the outlet. "Max loves going to Home Depot to see everyone. Everyone there were like 'oh my goodness, there's a lion here.'" Watch out Simba, there's a new challenger for Pride Rock.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

'It's Nonsense': Several Public Health Experts Denounce COVID-19 'Herd Immunity' Strategy

Several public health experts have criticized the Great Barrington Declaration, authored by infectious disease epidemiologists and public health scientists, which states that the most "compassionate approach" to the COVID-19 pandemic "balances the risks and benefits of reaching herd immunity."

According to the [declaration](#), which was discussed with reporters on a call with two top White House officials on Monday, only "vulnerable" people should actively protect themselves from COVID-19.

"Those who are not vulnerable should immediately be allowed to resume life as normal. Simple hygiene measures, such as hand washing and staying home when sick should be practiced by everyone to reduce the herd immunity threshold," reads the declaration, written by scientists from Harvard, Stanford and Oxford universities.

"Schools and universities should be open for in-person teaching. Extracurricular activities, such as sports, should be resumed. Young low-risk adults should work normally, rather than from home. Restaurants and other businesses should open. Arts, music, sport and other cultural activities should resume. People who are more at risk may participate if they wish, while society as a whole enjoys the protection conferred upon the vulnerable by those who have built up herd immunity," adds the declaration, which has been embraced by the White House, [according to The Hill](#).

However, the declaration has not been endorsed by other top health experts, like Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases who also serves on the White House's coronavirus task force.

"If you just let things rip and let the infection go, no masks, crowd, it doesn't make any difference - that quite frankly, George, is ridiculous," [Fauci told George Stephanopoulos](#) on ABC's "Good Morning America" on Thursday.

Citing experts, the [New York Times](#) reported that herd immunity, which occurs when the disease stops spreading because it has been contracted by nearly everyone in a population, is still far off into the future for COVID-19. Between 85% and 90% of the American population is [still susceptible to the respiratory disease](#), according to estimates by experts.

"You'll wind up with many more infections of vulnerable people, which will lead to hospitalizations and deaths. So I think we've just got to look that square in the eye and say it's nonsense," Fauci added.

In a statement Thursday, other organizations like the National Association of County and City Health Officials, the American Public Health Association, the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health and the Public Health Institute also slammed the declaration.

"COVID-19 carries a much higher risk of severe disease and death than other infections where herd immunity was attempted before a vaccine was available. It is illogical to ignore public health and scientific evidence when so many lives are at stake," [the joint statement reads](#).

Some experts have also said that the declaration is inherently flawed because it assumes that someone who recovers from COVID-19 will be immune to reinfection.

"We just don't really understand coronavirus immunology well enough to know whether this is going to be a minor, moderate or major concern," Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, told The Hill. "We have learned so much about COVID-19 over the course of the last seven months, and yet we have so much more to learn."

Some [studies](#) have indicated that antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, the virus which causes COVID-19, wane months following infection, suggesting that the body does not maintain long-term immunity to the virus.

Other [studies](#) have suggested that such antibodies can last up to four months in patients after their initial infection.

Some experts have also pointed out that even in young and healthy people, the virus can have long-term consequences for the heart and lungs.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

'Very Significant': 12-Year-Old Discovers 69-Million-Year Old Rare Fossil in Canada - Photos

Nathan Hrushkin, a 12-year-old boy, discovered a dinosaur skeleton dating back 69 million years in a fossil-rich part of Alberta, Canada, this past July.

According to the [CTV News](#), the amateur paleontologist discovered the hadrosaur fossil in the Nature Conservancy of Canada's Nodwell property at Horseshoe Canyon.

When Hrushkin first saw the fossils, he was "literally speechless," [he told the BBC](#).

"I wasn't even excited, even though I know I should have [been] ... I was in so much shock that I had actually found a dinosaur discovery," he added.

"I know that it's more commonly known as the duck-billed dinosaur," Hrushkin told CTV News. "They have the bills almost like ducks, and they're herbivores, and they stand on two feet - that sort of thing."

Hadrosaurs are members of the ornithischian family Hadrosauridae. This group of dinosaurs is best known for the flat, duck-bill appearance of the bones in their snouts.

When they got home, Nathan and his father contacted the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology in Drumheller, Alberta, because fossils are protected by law. The museum asked them to send photos and GPS coordinates of their discovery.

Even though hadrosaurs are the most commonly found fossils in the Alberta badlands, this particular fossil is noteworthy because it's a rare juvenile skeleton and was uncovered in a layer of rock where fossils are uncommon.

"This is very significant for the Nature Conservancy of Canada, because when we talk about land conservation we talk often about the benefit for future generations, but this is a really good opportunity to point out how conserving important landscapes also help us unearth mysteries of our planet's history," Carys Richards the communications manager with the Nature Conservancy of Canada, told CTV.

According to Francois Therrien, the curator of dinosaur paleontology at the Royal Tyrrell Museum, a full-grown hadrosaur would have measured 10 to 13 meters in length. The fossil discovered by Hrushkin only likely grew to 3 to 4 meters in length.

"So Nathan's discovery is actually significant because it starts to fill in that gap. It's a fossil from that area and from that time interval that will actually give us information about what was happening with dinosaurs 69 million years ago," Therrien explained.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Biden's Criticism of 1994 Crime Bill Not Enough, 'Whole Analysis' of US Police System Required

Former US Vice President Joe Biden on Thursday admitted that his support of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act was a mistake; however, Biden and the Democratic Party must demonstrate their new stance with actions, an analyst told Radio Sputnik.

At a town hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on Thursday, Biden admitted that supporting the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act was a mistake. The act, which allocated [\\$9.7 billion for prisons](#) and became the largest-ever crime bill in US history, has been blamed for increasing mass incarceration of people of color. However, during the town hall, Biden defended some aspects of the bill, stating that its worst effects were due to decisions made by individual states after it passed and that the bill was supported by many Black leaders at the time.

"The mistake came in terms of what the states did locally. What we did federally - you remember George, it was all about the same time for the same crime," Biden [told ABC anchor George Stephanopoulos](#).

Teresa Lundy, founder of TML Communications, told Radio Sputnik's Political Misfits on Friday that while the 1994 legislation may have been a quick fix to crime issues at the time, it ultimately led to a mass spike in incarceration rates.

"To speak on behalf of his colleagues, obviously, there were a lot of people who disagreed with the bill. It was voted because back then, there were some issues. There were some issues happening, and they needed something quick," [Lundy told hosts Michelle Witte and Bob Schlehuber](#), before noting that in present-day, the legislation needs to be revisited.

"We need to also look at what he's saying today in his new role, because at that time ... at the end of the day, it was voted on, and it was law."

"I think there has to be a whole analysis on the way the unions are structured to protect the police, because when you give officers ability to be law enforcement, there are some issues there as it relates to the education of some of these officers," Lundy told the hosts.

"Some of them are coming straight out of high school, especially the ones who were seasonal. College education wasn't required, or diversity and inclusion programs just weren't there," she continued, adding that she is looking at Democratic vice-presidential nominee Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA) to really "drive that conversation" over the next four years.

Biden's support for the 1994 crime bill during his time as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee has been widely criticized during the presidential campaign. Last year, Biden also admitted that the bill was a ["big mistake"](#) that "trapped an entire generation."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Videos: Despite Long Lines, US on Track for Historic Voter Turnout in 2020 Election
by [Evan Craighead](#)

With more than 22 million votes already cast in the 2020 US presidential election, experts believe voter turnout may reach a record 150 million - despite the hourslong wait to vote in some districts.

"We can be certain this will be a high-turnout election," Michael McDonald, a University of Florida political scientist who tracks voting via the US Elections Project, [told the Associated Press](#).

According to the [project's website](#), approximately 22,458,086 ballots have been cast so far in states such as California, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Maine, North Carolina, Nebraska, New Jersey, Nevada, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and South Dakota.

Democrats are currently showing up in stronger numbers, outvoting Republicans 2-1. However, some experts believe this disparity will soon even out.

"The Republican numbers are going to pick up," John Couvillon, a GOP pollster tracking early voting, asserted to AP. "The question is at what velocity, and when?"

As of this article's publication, voters have nationally cast 16% of the total ballots submitted in the 2016 general election, according to the US Elections Project.

Reports of voter suppression have been reignited in states such as Georgia, which began early voting on October 12.

"Georgia voters are excited and setting records every hour - and this is all during a pandemic, lest we forget ... we will have a successful election, keeping all of our voting options accessible in all parts of Georgia, regardless of zip code," said Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger on Wednesday, as [reported by ABC News](#).

"Some precincts are more favored than others by voters, and they just have longer lines ... [but] everyone will have the opportunity to vote."

Social media has been flooded with images and videos of voters across the country standing in massive lines with hourslong wait times.

[A fact sheet](#) released by the National Association of Letter Carriers estimates that while 139 million Americans participated in the 2016 general election, the number of ballots cast in the upcoming 2020 election "could surpass 150 million voters."

A total of 150 million ballots would amount to around [65% of the US population](#) casting votes.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Ratings King No More: Biden Earned More Views Than Trump in Town Hall Showdown
by [Evan Craighead](#)

The ratings are in, and it appears as if Democratic presidential nominee and former US Vice President Joe Biden's Thursday night town hall attracted more viewers than that of US President Donald Trump, whose program was simulcast across three networks.

Early Nielsen television ratings released on Friday revealed Biden attracted 13.9 million total viewers to his town hall on Thursday night, versus Trump's 13.1 million, [Bloomberg reported](#). While the former vice president's event was only broadcast via ABC, Trump's town hall could be viewed on NBC, MSNBC and CNBC.

An estimated 73.1 million viewers tuned into the September debate between Biden and Trump, Bloomberg reported.

Prior to the Thursday night broadcasts, NBC was slammed by a number of mainstream outlets that disagreed with the network's decision to feature Trump's town hall during the same time slot as Biden's live event.

October 15 was initially slated to be the date of a virtual debate between the two presidential hopefuls; however, the Commission on Presidential Debates [announced on October 9](#) that it was scrapping the matchup after Trump refused to participate.

NBC's decision prompted over 100 actors and producers to issue a letter to network management, calling the conflicting programming "a disservice to the American public."

Brian Steinberg, the senior TV editor at Variety magazine, [contended that despite](#) the initial backlash against NBC, the questioning Trump faced from NBC broadcast journalist Savannah Guthrie may have rescued the network from "one of the company's biggest messes in years." "You're the president. You're not, like, someone's crazy uncle who can just retweet whatever," Guthrie told the US president while speaking on his decision to retweet a QAnon-linked conspiracy theory. Trump told Guthrie that he was unfamiliar with QAnon.

Without mentioning ratings, Trump declared on Friday that he received “very good reviews” regarding his Thursday night town hall.

Outlets like Newsweek have claimed that teens on TikTok may have made an effort to deny Trump a ratings victory by tuning into Biden’s event on multiple devices at once.

“YouTuber Hank Green made a TikTok (that has been viewed more than 4 million times at the time of writing) in which he suggested that Trump hosted his event at the same time as Biden's so that he could brag about better ratings,” [Newsweek reported](#).

“On YouTube, ABC's live stream of Biden's town hall had around 2.8 million views at the time of writing,” the outlet claimed. “However, Trump's town hall was streamed on the NBC News, CNBC, and CNBC Television YouTube channels, and had 1.9 million, 1.6 million and 1 million views, respectively.”

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Twitter Backtracks, Allows Users to Share New York Post's Controversial Hunter Biden Story by [Evan Craighead](#)

Twitter confirmed Friday that it will now allow users to share links to the New York Post article titled “Hunter Biden emails show leveraging connections with his father to boost Burisma pay.”

A spokesperson for the social media platform [told The Hill](#) that netizens are now allowed to share the link to the article because “the once private information included is now widely available in the press and on other digital platforms.”

This move was carried out by Twitter Thursday night, following continued backlash from Republicans for over a day.

[Sen. Ted Cruz \(R-TX\)](#) and [Sen. Josh Hawley \(R-MO\)](#) issued letters on the matter to Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey and the Federal Election Commission, respectively.

[US President Donald Trump](#) and [Rep. Jim Jordan \(R-OH\)](#), the ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee, voiced concerns of censorship on social media and called for the repeal of Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996, which protects internet platforms from legal liability for third-party content, treating them as distributors rather than publishers of information.

Dorsey previously slammed his company's failure to communicate with the public on Wednesday.

“Our communication around our actions on the @nypost article was not great,” [Dorsey tweeted](#) alongside the [Twitter Safety announcement](#). “And blocking URL sharing via tweet or DM with zero context as to why we’re blocking: unacceptable.”

The platform previously claimed that the article, which shared unredacted emails allegedly exchanged between Hunter Biden and a Ukrainian businessman, violated its ["Hacked Materials Policy."](#)

“Policies are a guide for action, but the platforms are not standing behind their policies,” Joan Donovan, research director at Harvard University's Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy, [told the New York Times](#).

"They are merely reacting to public pressure and therefore will be susceptible to politician influence for some time to come."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Roman Catholic Priest to Be Released Following 2018 Activist Break-in at Nuclear-Capable US Base

by [Evan Craighead](#)

A 71-year-old Roman Catholic priest will spend virtually no additional time behind bars after he was granted time served during sentencing for his April 2018 break-in at a nuclear-capable US Navy submarine base in Georgia.

US District Court Judge Lisa Godbey Wood sentenced Rev. Stephen M. Kelly, a 71-year-old resident of Brunswick, on Thursday to 33 months in prison, three years' probation and associated restitution fees, [Religion News Service \(RNS\) reported](#).

However, Kelly was granted 30 months of time served and, under federal law, has accrued 108 days of "good time credit" for the two and a half years he has spent behind bars.

The 71-year-old has been held in Brunswick county jail since his arrest in April 2018.

"Father Kelly, it has been clear to me you are sincere in your beliefs," Wood said on Thursday.

"However, I would be remiss to discount the nature of the offense that we're looking at today and the risk to safety that you knowingly undertook."

[The Associated Press reported](#) that Kelly and six other activists - known as the Kings Bay Plowshares 7 - were convicted of trespassing, destruction of property and other charges associated with their April 4, 2018, storming of the Kings Bay Naval Base, which houses submarines armed with hundreds of nuclear weapons.

The activists allegedly recorded videos of themselves using wire cutters to bypass a locked security gate at Kings Bay. They then spray-painted "anti-nuclear messages and hammered on an outdoor display," AP reported.

During pre-sentencing, the priest referred to himself as a "prisoner of conscience for Christ" and one who preaches against "the sin that flourishes in weapons of mass destruction," RNS reported.

"I answer to a higher authority in that my faith imperative, as outlined in the tenets of the Catechism, missions me to respond to the needs of the poor, oppressed, disenfranchised, in any locality and without any exclusion to those with felony record," said Kelly in a statement to the judge.

"He's a fearless person," Patrick O'Neill, one of the Kings Bay Plowshares 7, said to RNS. "He's not burdened by the normal self-constraints of most of us. He's very driven in his effort to save the world from its own hand."

Kelly's sentencing followed the handing of a 17-month sentence to fellow activist Elizabeth McAlister, who was freed after the decision in June on account of time served. O'Neill was sentenced to 14 months in prison on Friday.

The other four activists have yet to be sentenced.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Hong Kong Pink Dolphins Enjoy Comeback as Covid-19 Pandemic Slows Marine Traffic
CCO
by [Victoria Teets](#)

Rare pink dolphins are returning to the waters near Hong Kong and Macau as a result of halted marine traffic in one of the world's busiest sea lanes due to the coronavirus pandemic.

As the impact of the pandemic has halted ferries, the beautiful marine creatures seem to be thriving. However, scientists still remain deeply concerned about their long-term survival in the Pearl River Delta region despite the hopeful signs, [reports the Bangkok Post](#).

The region comprises a number of mainland Chinese cities, including Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Dongguan, as well as the special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macau. The major industrial center is home to about 22 million people, meaning that the waters nearby are typically busy.

"And aside from such heavy shipping traffic, the dolphins' key habitat has been disrupted by numerous large-scale developments, including the construction of Hong Kong's airport on reclaimed land and the world's longest sea bridge connecting the financial hub to Macau and Zhuhai," the Post notes.

Conservationists like Naomi Brennan regularly board boats in the Pearl River Delta to observe the pink dolphins.

"Today we encountered three different groups of dolphins, six adults, and two sub-adults," she told the Post.

"They were engaging in a range of behavior, from feeding to traveling and socializing."

Her task of keeping an eye on the dolphins had been gloomy in the past, as their population has declined by 70-80% in the past 15 years. During this pandemic year, however, their numbers have bounced back.

Since February, ferries have not been traveling between Hong Kong and Macau, and scientists have taken the chance to document how the dolphins respond to the irregular calm.

"We're seeing much larger group sizes as well as much more socializing, mating behavior, which we hadn't really been seeing for the last five years or so," said Dr. Lindsay Porter, a Hong Kong-based marine scientist.

Since March, the number of pink dolphins in the area has grown by roughly a third, Porter's research team found.

"These areas seem to be important for feeding and socializing. So it's great that there's this refuge for them," added Brennan, a member of Porter's team.

Meanwhile, a massive, new reclamation project is also underway to build a third runway for Hong Kong's airport.

There is a tangible fear that the Pearl River Delta's pink dolphins could go extinct if the population's current trajectory continues, as it is estimated that there are only about 2,000 of the

mammals left in the area - the minimum number that conservationists believe is necessary to sustain the species, according to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

"Dolphins, and especially these estuarine dolphins, have a slow birth rate, a slow growth rate, a slow reproductive rate," said Laurence McCook, head of oceans conservation at WWF-Hong Kong. "So they need very careful management."